

Proposed Rules of Amateur Status Explanations

Instruction

Current Rule: An amateur may not receive any compensation for providing golf instruction, including when instruction is provided as part of salaried job or in exchange for other services or goods.

Instruction is narrowly defined as teaching the actual mechanics of swinging a golf club and hitting a golf ball.

The following exceptions allow an amateur to receive compensation for giving instruction:

- When employed by an educational institution or a camp, provided the instruction does not exceed half of the total time spent performing that job.
- While working as part of a program that has been approved by the national governing body.
- Providing instruction in writing (such as publishing a book or writing a magazine article).

Proposed New Rule: The Rule would remain largely unchanged, except that an amateur would be allowed to receive compensation for providing instruction in digital forms (such as social media), provided the instruction is “one-way”, meaning the amateur is showing how to perform a skill but is not giving instruction by using two-way communication to a specific individual or group (such as occurs in a traditional lesson).

Explanation for Proposal:

- Instruction remains very much part of the traditional role of the golf professional, noting that learning how to provide proper instruction is a standard and fundamental part of the curriculum in PGA education programs.
- Any change to the Rules of Amateur Status that could be seen as providing an opportunity for untrained persons to provide instruction for payment is seen as potentially detrimental to the game. In general terms, allowing amateurs to give instruction for payment has such potential. This applies not only to the instruction being given, but issues relating to insurance, customer protection and the use of club practice ranges and public driving ranges to provide such instruction.
- The current exception related to approved programs allows an amateur to give instruction for payment provided the program has been approved by the national governing body, and this approach avoids the potential risks identified above.
- An amateur would still be allowed to be employed by an educational institution or camp. This exception is a practical solution that allows a team coach to give limited instruction, in addition to other tasks performed as a coach, as long as those other tasks make up at least half of that person’s role as a coach. The exception provides young golfers who are part of the many golf teams and sports camps around the world the opportunity to learn the basics of the game under the tutelage of someone familiar with the game.
- The current Rules allowing an amateur to write a book on golf instruction would be extended to apply this same principle to more modern digital formats. This enables an amateur to raise his or her profile in line with the relaxations on name, image and likeness, and may assist the amateur in gaining sponsor support for their golfing activities. But such instruction is only allowed when being given to a non-specific audience, and retains the principle that instruction for payment to an individual or specific group is the remit of the golf professional.